

PROCEEDINGS

of a

MILITARY COURT FOR THE  
TRIAL OF WAR CRIMINALS

held at

LUNEBURG, GERMANY,

on

TUESDAY, 9 OCTOBER, 1945,

upon the trial of

JOSEF KRAMER

and

44 Others.

T W E N T I E T H D A Y.

Transcript of the Official  
Shorthand Notes.

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(At 0930 hours the court reassembles pursuant to adjournment, the same President, Members and Judge Advocate being present)

(The accused are again brought before the court)

The Accused JOSEF KRAMER is recalled and his examination by MAJOR WINWOOD is continued as follows:

- Q. You finished yesterday evening by telling us that Gruppenfuehrer Pohl left Belsen having told you that no more transports were to be sent to Belsen? A. Yes.
- Q. Did any more transports come? A. The last transports arrived on 23rd, 24th March. Then there was a pause until the first week of April.
- Q. What happened after the pause? A. At the end of March and beginning of April I asked through radio messages higher authority what I had to do in case the front line would come nearer and nearer and in case I had to evacuate my camp. My first three radio messages were not answered. My fourth, however, was so stringent I told them: "The front line has advanced now to a distance of 30 to 40 kilometres from my camp and I have got to know what I have to do." The answer to my fourth message was that my previous messages to this one were not understandable in Oranienburg. This message came from Glucks, and he said: "It cannot be understood because Himler gave orders that another 30,000 prisoners should be transferred to Belsen; therefore the sense of my messages could not be understood. Through the transfer of these so called exchange Jews about 20 barracks would have been free, so that the overcrowding could have been stopped until the allies arrived in my camp. I must add that in Oranienburg and in Berlin they must have known that my camp had been overcrowded already, nevertheless the last radio message which I received told me that 30,000 more are going to arrive in my camp. I had a conference with the area commander, General Boyneburg, who asked me what my plans were in case of evacuation. I answered him: "There is no question about evacuation because I have got new orders to be ready to receive 30,000 more prisoners." He asked me: "Well, can you accommodate these 30,000?" I answered him: "No, you know that my camp is overcrowded and that is the reason, General, why I ask you to help me." I told him: "My rank is only hauptsturmfuehrer, which is not high enough to do anything about it, but you, as a General, might have a longer arm and you might be able to help me." In my own presence he rang up higher authority in Hanover and in my presence he spoke there with a General. He told him: "Belsen is this very large concentration camp, the commandant of which is now in my office and tells me he has got to receive another 30,000 more prisoners in his camp." He told him also that the commandant is just telling him that there is no more room for those 30,000 in the whole area of Bergen-Belsen. This General told him, the platzcommander, on the phone that he knew about Himler's order regarding those 30,000 prisoners. He was told that if my camp has not room enough for it then he must see that they are accommodated in the barracks in Bergen, and if those should not prove to be sufficient enough then the camp at Munster, about 20 kilometres from Bergen, has to be used. General Boyneburg answered: "For the moment there are still soldiers in the barracks." Then he got the orders to evacuate those barracks from soldiers and to make them ready. Then General Boyneburg tried to point out the difficulties of this measure, but from the other side the conversation was finished: "You will get a written order and anyway this order should be on its way now." Then the telephone conversation finished, and General Boyneburg said to those present - present were Col. Harries, Col. Smicht and a third colonel whose name I do not know, and my administrative official, Vogler - he told us: "Well, gentlemen, you must be ready to receive 30,000 more prisoners, because an evacuation of the camp is out of the question."

- Q. Did these transports come? A. The transports have arrived. I want to add that General Boyneburg asked me whether I knew anything about the date of the probable arrival of these transports. I answered him: "I do not know anything apart from this last radio message which tells me to receive 30,000 prisoners." This conversation took place, as far as I remember, on the 2nd or 3rd April. On the 4th or 5th, but I believe on the 4th, the first transports arrived.
- Q. How many came with the first transport? A. From the 4th until the 13th April night and day transports arrived. Train loads with about 2,000 to 3,000 people, quite apart from those transports on trucks, lorries, and also transports which arrived on foot. Apart from those 30,000 I was to receive all the working kommandos of the following places: Hallesleben, Braunschwein, Braunschwein Drutter, Hanover, Porte Westphalia and in the north of Bremen. In my estimation it would be about 15,000 more prisoners. I should have received then 30,000 and 15,000, 45,000 altogether, but in reality from the 4th until the 13th about 28,000 prisoners arrived. When the first transports arrived those barracks on the barrack ground, Truppenübungsplatz, were not free. The commandant there asked me to take over the first few transports, in the meantime he will see to it that the barracks should be ready as quickly as possible. That was the reason why I had been forced to take the first 8,000 or 10,000 prisoners, new arrivals, into my camp. Those transports which came on April 9th or 8th, they were accommodated in the area of the barracks. That was the area which here during the trial was always called camp No. 2. Well, instead of being able to diminish the strength of my camp, as was my plan, I was forced to take in more and more and to overcrowd it. If I would not have accepted those prisoners they should have been left in the open. I said to myself: "Still, it is better if they have a roof over their heads as they would have to camp in the woods", and I had to realise it was early April, it was still quite cold, cold spring weather, and if they would have been forced to stay in the open they would have all fallen ill and would have died.
- Q. Where did these transports come from? A. Those 30,000 came from the concentration camp at Mittenburg, which is called Dora.
- Q. Who came in charge of the last 15,000? A. It was Obersturmführer Hessler, who was put in charge of camp No. 2.
- Q. What arrangements did you make about feeding the people in No. 2 camp? A. Those had nothing at all. Personally I could not give them anything because those reserves which I had were reserves for a certain period of time, and they were for the inmates of my own camp. I gave Hessler a member of my own administrative staff who should have helped him to get some sort of food or supplies for the inmates of his own camp. To get some food or any sort of supplies would have been, because the front lines were all broken, quite impossible. Apart from that the situation of transport was very difficult. My own transports, my own trucks, were shot down by dive bombers on Wednesday and Thursday before the arrival of the Allies, so that all that was left was one single truck which I had. In my opinion - and I can only say opinion because I do not know exactly - the Wehrmacht was prepared then to give some supplies in the barrack area to Hoessler, because they were afraid that some trouble might arise in their own barrack areas, which they wanted to avoid. But those supplies were only given under the promise that I would restitute them in the moment when my own supplies will arrive. Hoessler received them in one vehicle so that he could get from the station at Bergen potatoes and turnips into his own camp, because I had only one single vehicle myself. Bread and all the other supplies Hoessler received from the store of the Wehrmacht. Water supplies in his part of the camp was also received by the water wagons of the Wehrmacht.
- Q. As commandant at Belsen were you responsible for camp No. 2? A. Yes. Although it was not the sphere of my responsibility I took it over because

there was nobody else there. Hoessler himself had no administrative staff and no vehicle - nothing at all apart from 15,000 prisoners.

Q. I want to ask you a few isolated questions about different isolated events. When you first came to Belsen did you make any alterations in the routine of the camp? A. Yes.

Q. What did you do? A. The first thing I did was to dissolve the small sort of compounds into which the big camp was sub-divided. Then I planned a new kitchen. This work started in March. I could not start earlier because that hut was previously accommodating prisoners. In the women's compound I gave to the C.R.S. a whole hut, because previously they had only a very small hut of the length of 8 to 10 metres. That happened still before I took over the previous prisoner of war camp. Then I gave orders that no more blockfuhrers should be allowed to do any duties in the women's compound; the whole service routine should be fulfilled by female aufseherin. Although from Berlin plans were made already in 1943 for a new sewerage system, plans and inspections, nothing had been done, but I started with this new sewerage system when I was commandant. When I made my plans for these new building things I encountered enumerable difficulties. Whilst in the central office of the Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamtes or Amtsgruppe "C" they were of the opinion that no more money should be spent on my camp for new buildings. One official of this Amtsgruppe "C", I believe an Obersturmführer or Hauptsturmführer, I do not know which, he came and he told that there has been the intention to build an entirely new camp.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Major Winwood, is this really what you want our attention to be directed to?

MAJOR WINWOOD: I would like to leave it as it is at the moment.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: We do not want it in great detail unless you want it. I thought you wanted him to introduce new methods, such as appels.

MAJOR WINWOOD: Yes. (To the witness) When you first got to Belsen were appels held? A. I really introduced the morning roll call, because I was responsible to my authority for the strength of my camp, and I could not count them in another way. Apart from that the inmates of Belsen did not go very much on working parties; in fact they were only inside the camp for camp maintenance, and therefore these morning roll calls, counts, was the only work they were performing during the day. I believed it was quite good for the health of the inmates if they left for a short time at least the very bad air in their huts, because I am sure that that air in the huts was not very good for their health.

Q. It has been alleged that sick people had to attend the appels. A. Yes, that is true. I gave those orders because the people were too lazy even to go for a short time out of their barracks, and then they all said "We are sick." I gave orders then that anybody who feels sick should report sick and go to the doctor for inspection; if the doctor certifies him then he is allowed to stay away from the appel, otherwise everybody had to go on roll call. Without this order of mine it would have been quite impossible to perform any roll call, even if it would have lasted for five hours; we would have never finished it.

Q. What happened to the healthy men prisoners? A. Those prisoners, those parties of prisoners who came, were healthy enough, so that after a fortnight they regained their strength. But all those who were fit enough to work I had to put into new working parties. About the end of March I still got an order from Oranienburg to produce about 2,500 healthy strong prisoners for working purposes. I could not execute this order because I did not have those prisoners. Consequently in the men's compound I had only sick people there when the transports from Dora started to arrive.

Q. Did some of the staff of Auschwitz come to Belsen? A. Yes, with the transports arriving from Auschwitz several unterfuhrers and aufscherin did come to Belsen.

Q. What had happened to Auschwitz? A. As far as I know Auschwitz had been evacuated on the 18th and 19th January, because the Russian front line got nearer and nearer.

Q. Did you keep records of the internees? A. When I arrived in Belsen I had to see that there were no records kept at all. So then I gave orders that at least some sort of index cards should be kept so that all the personal information about prisoners could be got in like that.

Q. Who was in charge of this card index? A. The political department of the camp.

Q. Did you know at the time whether there were any British subjects in your camp?

A. No.

Q. Did you ever receive instructions for the execution of any internees in Belsen?

A. Yes.

- Q What was that? A. I got the order for the execution of two men, the names were provided. I did not know who really they were so I gave orders to the political department and to the Lagerfuhrer to find out whether those that were named were in my camp or not. A few hours later the Lagerfuhrer reported to me that one of the above named men was sick and in the hospital, he had typhus fever. The other one had been already transferred with those fit to work to another working place. I did not do anything on that day but on the next morning it was reported to me that the man I was asking for had died in the meantime.
- Q Had you given orders for that man to be executed? A. No; I gave only orders to find out whether those people were in my camp or not. It is possible that I mentioned there was an order for the execution of those two men but I did not give any order to fulfil this execution.
- Q What were the names of the two men? A. I do not remember the names.
- Q Were they German names or were they obviously British names? A. I could not say; they were not German names, they were foreign names but whether they were British names I could not tell.
- k Q [What happened to all the records in the camp? A. In the month of March a got a radio message, an order signed by Obergruppenfuhrer Pohl, that in the name of Reichsführer Himmler all the documents, all the records, all personal papers, all card indices - in one word everything written - had to be destroyed.] In this order it was made clear that, of course, the very first thing which had to be destroyed was this order itself, the order which arrived. Consequently on this order all papers, everything that was in the camp, was burned.
- l Q Do you remember an occasion when a Russian girl was brought back to the camp? A. Yes.
- Q Will you tell the Court what happened? A. This girl escaped from this working site and a few hours later she was caught by a member of the Wehrmacht and brought back to the camp. In answer to my questions she told me first that she had lost her way, then that an S.S. man had sent her away, then that she had decided to go back; in all she told several lies. I asked her who had helped her to escape and she said nobody although I had reason to believe that some other people had been with this escaping party as well. As a result of these lies I boxed her ears. I sent her back into the camp with the order that next day she should be with a working party that was not going to leave the camp.
- Q Did anything else happen to her in your presence or on your orders? A. No.
- Q Do you remember the witness Dr. Bimko? A. Yes.
- Q Do you remember the accusation that she made against you that you kicked some Russians? A. Yes.
- Q Do you remember another witness coming very shortly afterwards and telling the same story except that one Russian was apparently left on the ground dead? A. Yes.
- Q What is the truth of that story? A. The truth is that both stories of these witnesses are a product of their fantasy; if I had been guilty of doing such a thing they should have mentioned it in their first statements, but as far as I can see they only thought it out in the Court.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: We are having some difficulty in making sure which incident you are putting to the witness. Can you help us? The first one we attribute to a statement by Herta Ehlert.

MAJOR WINWOOD: Yes, and by Helen Hammermasch.

COL. BACKHOUSE: It is in volume 8 of the transcript, page 19.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Which is the second one; is it Capt. Sington?

COL. BACKHOUSE: Hammermasch volume 8 page 20.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: I do not understand what references are being given. Is it in the transcript?

COL. BACKHOUSE: Yes, Ada Bimko on Volume 5 of the transcript, page 9. The other one was Hammermasch, Volume 8 page 20.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Are there any more?

MAJOR WINWOOD: Yes, transcript volume 13 page 10, Roman Sompolinski.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: What we are trying to get at is you have put two incidents already and we wanted to get the references in regard to them. We have got the first incident and the second one and we want to be quite sure there were only two people referred to.

MAJOR WINWOOD: That is correct. I am going on to the third one.

(To the witness): Do you remember the witness Sompolinski who came into this Court with a scar on his hand? A. Yes.

Q And he accused you of wounding him and killing two Hungarians? A. It is not true. I do not know how he got the scar. During all my service in concentration camps and with troops I have never shot at people knowingly or not knowingly.

Q Did you in the first two weeks of April receive a message from the Wehrmacht barracks to go down there? A. Yes, from General Boineburg.

Q After that did you receive another order to go down to see Col. Harries? A. After General Boineburg left the place I received a message that Col. Harries had become garrison commander.

Q Did you go and see him? A. Yes.

Q What date was that? A. On the 10th or the 11th of April.

Q Did he give you any instructions? A. In these days there was talk about handing over all the Bergen area to allied troops. These conferences took place on the 12th of April and in the night of that day I received orders to see this Colonel.

Q What instructions did he give you the second time you went? A. I had to wait for quite a long time because I was told — I do not know for certain it was true — that the English Brigadier was still in the office. With me were about 15 to 18 German and Hungarian officers waiting. At about 2300 hours we were called into the office of Col. Harries. Col. Harries told us about the conditions of truce and the handing over without fighting of the Bergen area. A certain district would be arranged in which no fighting was going to take place. The administration of the military barracks as well as of the concentration camp had to go on. To make known which people were working with the administration, each of them had to wear a stamped armband. The conditions concerning the military barracks did not interest me. I was only interested in the conditions concerning the concentration camp. Col. Harries told me and the others — about 18 officers — that the guarding troops of the concentration camp had to

leave on Friday 13th April at 12 o'clock in the afternoon. At that time the guarding of the camp had to be taken over by the German Wehrmacht or by Hungarian troops. Only those S.S. people who were working on administration were allowed to remain in camp. In the conditions of truce it was said that those remaining S.S. people would not become prisoners. Conditions agreed on by both sides were that those S.S. men, after the British troops had taken over, would be set free to go back through the front line to their homes. One of the conditions of the truce, as I know for certain as Col. Harries told me, was that the administrative personnel, not only of the S.S. but also of the Wehrmacht, were allowed to take arms and materials with them when going back through the lines. On the next day I told my administrative staff those conditions and I gave the order that nobody was allowed to leave the camp. In this Court it has been said that I went against the condition of the truce by not taking any arms, but Col. Harries not only told me we were going to take our arms with us when we left the camp but we were allowed to carry our arms in the camp as well. On Friday the 13th April the camp was taken over by the Wehrmacht who were going to do the guarding and seeing that everything was in order and so on.

- Q Did you yourself ever see a copy of the armistice terms? A. No, I have not seen a copy myself; I was standing about three metres away from Col. Harries when he was reading the conditions in the presence of 18 other officers.
- Q From this time onwards did you consider yourself under the command of Col. Harries? A. As far as the camp was concerned, yes, but not as far as the administration was concerned because I was doing that with my own staff. I want to point out that when the first English officer arrived in the camp I told him I had to give Col. Harries notice about this.
- Q Was that Capt. Sington with the loud speaker van? A. Yes.
- Q What else did you say to him when he arrived at Belsen? A. After he arrived in Belsen he told me he had to give a message by means of his loud speaker van to the population of the camp. I told him that the prisoners were quiet at the moment but I feared that if he was going into the camp with his van and was sending out his message it might cause some trouble. Capt. Sington at first went away but soon he came back and he gave his message by means of his loud speaker van. How the prisoners reacted to his message has been shown in the camp.  
was
- Q What happened in the camp? A. The first thing that the prisoners destroyed everything; they destroyed the remaining bobs, they made fires and they started looting. It has been said that there was no trouble in the camp, but I want to point out that several stores were looted and the tanks had to guard the food stores, and on the next day many troops had to make use of fire-arms and several men were found killed on the next morning. This all proves that there was some trouble. Two hours after the loud speaker van had gone through the camp the camp was in an indescribable condition.
- Q Was that the condition of the camp when the British Senior Medical Officers arrived? A. Yes, something like that.
- Q Did Capt. Sington ask you what kind of internees you had in the camp? A. Yes.
- Q What was your answer? A. I said something like prisoners who were in schutzhalt arrest, habitual criminals, homosexuals - something like that.

- Q Did he ask you a further question in regard to the internees? A. He asked about political prisoners and I said "Well, those are the prisoners in schutzhalt arrest."
- Q Do you remember anything that happened down by the potato patch? A. Yes.
- Q What happened there? A. I went through the camp with the British officers and suddenly we heard shots being fired. We came near to the potato patch and I saw some people lying there killed. That is all I know.
- Q When Capt. Sington made his announcement on the loud speaker did he say anything about your position in the camp from that time onwards? A. I do not quite remember what was being said, but it was something like the S.S. has no more power, the National Socialist Party is kaput, has come to its end, and the prisoners were given to understand or at least they understood that the British troops were taking over the camp and that the S.S. had no more to say in the matter.
- Q At the time the British troops came were you a member of the Waffen S.S.? A. Yes.
- Q Were you a member of the German armed forces? A. As a part of the Waffen S.S. I was a member of the German Wehrmacht.
- Q Were you allowed to go home or back through the German lines? A. No, I was arrested on the 15th April. I told the British officer on the spot that that went against the conditions of the truce but his answer was: "I have got my orders and I have got to carry them out".
- Q Did you ever find out what the truce really said? A. No, apart from the words told by Col. Harries I do not know anything more.
- Q When you were arrested were you treated as a prisoner of war? A. Yes, I believe so. In the beginning I was sent to a transit camp and then later to a fortification in Belgium. I asked the Belgian commandant of that camp, a major, whether I was a prisoner of war or a civilian internee or a civilian prisoner, or what - what it is - but he would not give me any answer. In my opinion it is against the treatment of a prisoner of war that during the whole time I was manacled night and day.
- Q Were your feet shackled as well as your hands? A. In the beginning only my feet and then in Belgium my hands as well. That was not a very pleasant time.
- Q Were you shackled when you were under the charge of British troops? A. Yes, it was always under the supervision of British troops.

MAJOR WINWOOD: That is the end of my examination on behalf of Kramer, but I have one or two questions to put to him on behalf of my other accused.

COLONEL BACKHOUSE: I understand the Polish Interpreter has been taken ill and I understand that somebody has offered to take his place.

THE PRESIDENT: Is the Polish Defending Officer satisfied with the way this Interpreter speaks Polish ?

LIEUT. JEDRZEJOWICZ: Yes.

(Lieut. Z.E. Racieski, Polish Army, is duly sworn as Interpreter).

MAJOR WINWOOD: When did Dr. Klein come as a permanent doctor to Belsen ?  
A The first time at the end of the month of January for ten days; the second time he took over the camp on the 13th April.

Q Prior to the 13th April, was he under another doctor at Belsen ?  
A Yes, Hauptsturmführer Horstmann.

Q Who was the senior doctor ? A The senior doctor before Dr. Klein took over was Hauptsturmführer Horstmann.

Q Do you know what instructions Dr. Horstmann gave Dr. Klein ? A No. I must add that Dr. Klein took also over in the beginning or in the middle of the month of March from Dr. Schnabel, who was taken ill. Dr. Klein came from another camp and was to stay in the camp of Belsen for a fortnight. As Dr. Schnabel fell ill and that later on went on leave Dr. Klein had to remain for a longer period in the camp.

Q When Dr. Klein was working under Dr. Horstmann, what kind of work did Dr. Klein do ? A I saw him mostly in the military barracks area, but he also came to the camp itself. Whether he came on his own or whether he received an order from Dr. Horstmann to come I do not know.

Q Was there a big hospital in the Wehrmacht barracks ? A There was a big hospital and, I believe, I am not sure, also a smaller one.

Q Was that available for internees ? A No, that was only for wounded soldiers from the front. Even my own S.S. men, if they were taken ill - and in the month of March I had quite a number of sick cases - after they were just a little bit better I had to withdraw them from that hospital of the military barracks and take them back into my own camp. The senior doctor of that hospital in the military barrack area said again and again: "I need the beds for the soldiers from the front line".

Q What happened to Red Cross parcels when they arrived at Belsen ?  
A I received several times Red Cross parcels. When they arrived then the camp leader of those exchange Jews, the oldest or the camp leader of them, he came and he had to sign these receipts so that he knew exactly how many parcels arrived. If single persons received parcels then they received it alone. If, however, the parcels were addressed to the whole of the camp, then they were distributed in that above mentioned manner. These parcels were received by the Jewish camp leader in my presence. How he distributed them inside the camp I do not know; I told them that is their own affair. Once parcels containing medicine and all sorts of drugs arrived, also for the prisoners. I gave those to the senior officer at that time, Dr. Schnabel, and left it to him to distribute it and to use it as he thinks fit. Medicine could only be obtained, at any rate through the doctor, and the other drugs I wanted to make sure that really those persons who needed them most should get them, and it is only the doctor who can decide about it.

Q What happened to Dr. Horstmann on the 12th April ? A On the 12th April he took part in this commission deciding the truce, and on the 13th April he went away with the other part of the troops.

Q Was he in Auschwitz when you were there ? (Indicating accused No. 4,

George Kr aft). A I do not know this man. I know him only from here, from Luneburg. I am almost sure of it, because this man has some eye troubles and I am sure that I would have remembered him.

MAJOR WINWOOD: That is the conclusion of my examination.

Cross-examined by MAJOR MUNRO.

- Q You have spoken about the accused Hoessler. Was he one of your subordinates at Auschwitz ? A No, he was in Auschwitz No. 1.
- Q Was it part of Hoessler's duties to attend parades for gas chamber selections ? A Yes, because there was a certain rota; there were different officers, and if it was his turn then he had to be present.
- Q From whom would his orders come to attend these parades ? A I have not seen the orders; I cannot say exactly, but I should think either Hoess or Baer.
- Q Now I want to ask you a question about the selection itself. When the main selection had been made was there further sorting out of those people who had been kept back to go into the concentration camp ? A When I was in Berkenau, yes. I mentioned only yesterday those selections which took place in the C.R.S. Station there, where those exchange Jews were.
- Q On arrival at Auschwitz were some prisoners picked out to go to camps other than Berkenau ? A No, the transports came to Berkenau and remained there.
- Q Were prisoners ever transferred from Berkenau to other camps ? A Yes, for working parties.
- Q Now you told us about a revolt at the crematorium and of the measures which were taken to put it down. Who was the senior S.S. officer present on this occasion ? A It was Baer who, when I arrived, was already present at his place.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: He has already given a full account of that.

MAJOR MUNRO: I just wanted to confirm that it was Baer.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: The Court have a great deal to remember and if they have had an incident once they would prefer not to have it again if you can help it.

MAJOR MUNRO: If there had been an execution at Auschwitz, from whom would the orders have come ? A Either Hoess or Baer.

- Q I will not turn to Belsen. Would you say that camp No. 2 at Belsen was left by you entirely to Hoessler's control ? A Yes.
- Q Could the various aufseherin in Belsen have done anything themselves to improve conditions ? A No. The conditions were so in Belsen that there was nothing available really and therefore the aufseherin, the supervisors, could not do anything to improve it.
- Q Was it possible for an S.S. man or woman to leave the S.S. at his or her own request ? A No.
- Q Did you ever receive any such request ? A Yes.
- Q And what was your answer ? A I forwarded this application to higher authority, to Oranienburg, and it came back to the applicant and the request was not complied with.

Cross-examined by MAJOR CRANFIELD.

- Q Did camp No. 2 at Belsen contain only men ? A Yes.
- Q At Auschwitz were the women's working parties made up by nationalities ?  
A No.
- Q Now you mentioned yesterday another Hauptsturmführer Kramer. Was he at Auschwitz at one time in charge of the guard company ? A When I arrived to Berkenau he was in charge of one guard company.
- Q And did that Company have machine guns and dogs ? A Machine guns, yes; no dogs.
- Q Now I want to ask you about the accused Grese. First of all, is it a fact that the aufseherin were not in the S.S. ? A Yes. She was employed in the form of a supervisor, aufscherin, and the title was "Gefalgschaft"
- Q It has been suggested that you sent for members of your staff at Auschwitz to come to Belsen. Did you send for Grese to come from Auschwitz to Belsen ? A Yes. Grese came with a transport to Belsen. I reported to Oranienburg about all the aufscherin who arrived with transports, and in the case of Grese I added a request that she should remain with me.
- Q What I want to know is, did you ask for her before she was sent ?  
A No, only after she had arrived in my camp.
- Q Now I want to go back to the dogs. Were they trained police dogs ?  
A Yes.
- Q Would they obey only the orders of the man or woman who had trained them ?  
A Yes. There came even a strict order from Oranienburg that no man or woman in charge of a dog is allowed to change his dog over.
- Q So far as you are aware, did the accused Grese ever have a dog at Auschwitz ?  
A When I was in Berkenau I never saw Grese with a dog either during duty hours or off duty.
- Q Does that answer also apply to Belsen ? A Yes.
- Q It has been suggested that Grese came with you on your inspections at Belsen; is that true ? A No. When I went on inspection then in the men's compound I was accompanied by the lagerführer; in the women's compound by the oberaufseherin.
- Q Is it true that at all times Grese's rank was aufseherin and she was never oberaufseherin ? A Yes.
- Q As her Commanding Officer, I want you to tell the Court how Grese discharged her duties as aufscherin. A As her Commandant I can only say the very best about Grese. She took her duties very seriously and discharged them very well indeed.
- Q You have heard the accusations made against her in this Court of shooting prisoners with a pistol and of using them with savage cruelty. What do you say about that ? A It is not true.
- Q Do you remember an occasion at Auschwitz when the aufscherin had made for themselves in the weberi some whips ? A Yes, I do.
- Q Did you see the whips ? A Yes.
- Q What were they made of ? A Some sort of cellophane paper or some cellulose; I cannot say exactly.
- Q What action did you take in regard to them ? A I prohibited the  
12.

carrying of whips.

Q If corporal punishment was carried out at Auschwitz by the political department, could it be done without your knowledge ? A It could have been possible that it was without my knowledge, because the political department was situated in camp No. 1.

Q To do so the political department would not require your permission ?  
A No.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN ROBERTS.

Q When did you first see this man ? (Indicating accused No. 14, Oscar Schmedidzt). A For the first time in the courtyard in Celle, during daily exercise, through the window I saw this man then. I have known him personally only now since Luneburg.

Q Do you know when this man first came to Belsen ? (Indicating accused No. 16, Karl Flrazich). A I believe the middle of the month of March or towards the end of the month; between the middle and the end of the month of March.

Q Do you remember an occasion round the beginning of April when you sentenced him to 10 days detention for going out of camp without your permission ?  
A Yes. I prohibited everybody to leave the camp because of typhus and typhus fever being rampant, and against my order he left the camp, and therefore I gave him ten days detention.

Q Did the cooks at Belsen carry arms ? A. Yes.

Q All the time ? A. I have seen them on their way towards and from the camp, but whether they carried arms in the kitchens themselves I could not say. I have not seen them.

Q Did you find it necessary in the period shortly before the British arrived to place armed guards around cookhouses to maintain order ? A. Yes, in addition I separated the forward part of the women's compound from the other part where all the sick people were concentrated, and that was just the part where the kitchens were situated.

Q During the last two or three days were those guards Hungarians ? A. I could not tell exactly. They may have been German Wehrmacht soldiers or Hungarians. At any rate, there were no SS troops.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN BROWN

Q Can you remember seeing this man at Auschwitz ? (Indicating No. 17 Ladislaw Gura) A. I did not know him in Berkenau.

Q Can you remember the occasion of his arrival at Belsen ? A. Yes.

Q Was there anything unusual about that ? A. He came as a prisoner with other prisoners for whom a search was going on, and as soon as he arrived he was put under arrest.

Q Did he leave Belsen on the 12th April ? A. Yes, that day he came out of arrest and immediately left the camp.

Q With the exception of a period of five days was he under arrest all the time he was at Belsen ? A. That might be correct.

- Q Do you remember this man at Belsen ? (Indicating Fritz Mathes) A. Yes.
- Q Can you tell the court where he worked while he was at Belsen ? A. When I arrived in December he was working in the SS kitchen. In January he came out of the kitchen and went to the bath house.
- Q Did he ever work in one of the camp cookhouses ? A. During the time I was in Belsen, no.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN FIELDEN

- Q Do you know when this man arrived in Belsen ? (Indicating No.22 (Anchor Pinchen)) A. It may have been the middle of March or the end of March. I have not seen him in Belsen for a long time.
- Q On the morning of the 13th April I understand you called a parade of all the SS men in Belsen to acquaint them with the terms of the truce ? A. Yes.
- Q Who was left behind to guard Camp No.1 whilst that parade was being held ? A. As far as I know only the block leaders in the block leader's room. In the camp itself were members of the German Wehrmacht. It was in the morning of the 13th April after the German Wehrmacht and Hungarian troops had taken over the guarding of the camp.
- Q You said that a certain portion of the women's camp at Belsen was set apart to receive the sick cases. Was that to isolate the typhus cases ? A. Yes.
- Q Was it forbidden for any member of the SS staff to enter that part of the women's camp which had been isolated ? A. Yes, that is why I put those guards at the separation.
- Q Was Block number 213 in that part of the women's camp which was isolated ? A. Yes, that was the next block to the blocks of the hospital.
- Q Could an SS man on the administrative staff also act as a blockfuhrer ? A. No.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN CORELLY

- Q When did you first see this man ? (Indicating number 26, Heinrich Schreirer) A. Also in the gaol in Celle. I only met him personally during the court at Luneburg.
- Q Are you prepared to swear that he was not a member of your staff at Belsen ? A. Yes, not with my staff.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN NEAVE

- Q Do you know when this woman came to Belsen ? (Indicating No.35 Lara Opitz) A. I think she arrived with one of the many transports, but I can be mistaken. It may have been the end of February or March.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN PHILLIPS

- Q Can you tell me what were the duties of an aufseherin in a cookhouse at Belsen ? A. It was ordered that where female prisoners worked together with male prisoners an aufseherin had to be present to keep order.

Q Who did she get her orders from ? A. The orders concerning this duty from the Oberaufseherin.

Cross-examined by LT. BOYD

Q Regarding the women's compound at Belsen, is it correct that that compound moved into fresh blocks about the middle of March 1945 ? A. Yes, women's compound 2 came into use about the middle of March.

Q Is it also correct that the blocks used had previously been used for stores and purposes of that sort ? A. Yes.

Q When women's compound No.1 moved into those blocks were there any existing ablutions in the camp ? A. There were some lavatories but no wash house.

Q Was a wash house built ? A. No, we did not build a wash house. We simply put some taps in the open air.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN MUNRO

Q Do you know when this woman arrived in Belsen ? (Indicating No.45 Hildagard Hahnel) If you do not know within a day or two, say "I do not know" -

C OL. BACKHOUSE: I do not want my friend to tell him what the answer must be. I think he should ask whether the witness knows or does not know.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Cannot you ask him whether he knows the exact date ?

CAPT. MUNRO: Yes.

THE WITNESS: I cannot tell the exact day.

Cross-examined by LT. JEDRZEJOWICZ

Q Who was making enquiries in matters like escapes and complications with the outside world ? A. The Political Department from Auschwitz 1.

Q If there was a case of a secret organisation in existence at Auschwitz or suspected to be in existence at Auschwitz, who would be dealing with the case ? A. The Political Department.

Q Could the blockaltester or lageraltester take part in those enquiries by helping the Political Department ? A. No, she could only hand in a report if she had seen something, but she could not do anything on her own initiative.

(At 1300 hours the Court adjourns)

(At 1430 hours the Court re-assembles)

The accused are again brought before the Court.

The Accused JOSEF KRAMER is recalled and is  
Cross-examined by COL. BACKHOUSE as follows:

- Q. Do you believe in God? A. Yes.
- Q. Do you remember the oath which you took when you first went into that witness box? A. Yes.
- Q. Do you realise that to lie after you have taken that oath is deliberate perjury? A. Yes.
- Q. Do you remember the first statement you made at Diest? A. Yes.
- Q. Do you remember you took precisely the same oath before you made it? A. No, after I gave thid declaration.
- Q. Did you make that oath before you signed the statement? A. I am not sure whether it was before or after. I remember only that I swore after the statement; nobody said that I should swear before I made the statement.
- Q. I put it to you that in the presence of Col. Genn, who is sitting here, you took precisely the same oath that you have taken in this court before you made that statement. A. Yes.
- Q. And I put it to you that you lied and know you were lying when you made that statement on the same oath when you said there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz at all. A. I said already yesterday that at that time I felt still bound to my word of honour about that subject; that is the reason why I said something different at that time as later.
- Q. And you think your so called word of honour excuses perjury, do you? A. I was not told that it will be a statement which will be put to the court, or I was not told for what purpose this statement is being made. I was only told: "We are going to ask you a few questions."
- Q. Does your answer mean then that you think you can lie if you think the statement is not being put before a court? A. Yes, because I felt bound at that time to my word of honour. If I would have been told at that time that this statement or an enquiry is for the purpose of the court, or if I would have been sworn before the statement, I would have thought differently, even at that time.
- Q. I put it to you that you were, in fact, sworn before you made that statement. A. It is not so. I was fetched from the cells and I was asked during two days questions, and only afterwards I was told that I must take the oath upon that what I have given as a statement.
- Q. I suggest to you that you went on lying about the gas chamber until you were shown photographs which had been taken of the gas chamber at Natzweiller, and that is the first time you admitted the existence of one. A. No, it is not so, because between the two statements I was not asked any more. During my interrogation at Celle I had proof from the very beginning quite independant whether the photos were shown to me or not.
- Q. I want to turn to the time when you joined the Nazi party. What in fact was your first employment with the party? A. When I joined the party I had, in fact, nothing to do at all with the party; only later when I joined the S.S. did I start work in the office.
- Q. Were not you one of the first concentration camp guard? A. No.
- Q. And have not you been consistently chosen and used for the dirtiest jobs in the concentration camps? A. No, I was only working in the office as shorthand typist, nothing else.

- Q. What was the purpose of the Natzweiller camp? A. The idea was to let the prisoners work in the quarry which was very near by.
- Q. Were prisoners not regularly supplied from that camp to Strasbourg for experiments? A. No.
- Q. Was there any gas chamber there before you arrived? A. No.
- Q. Was it constructed under your instructions? A. Yes.
- Q. And did you quite deliberately gas 80 prisoners in that gas chamber which you had constructed? A. Yes, on the orders of Reichsführer Himmler. That was a special transport which came particularly for that purpose to the camp at Natzweiller.
- Q. Was that for the purpose of supplying those bodies to Dr. Hoess in order that he might experiment on them? A. I do not know what he has done with them. My orders were to supply those bodies for Dr. Hoess at the University at Strasbourg.
- Q. And you were prepared to kill 80 people simply on orders for that purpose? A. It was the order of the highest military authority. I can imagine what they would have done with me during war if I would have refused to have obeyed that order.
- Q. Are you suggesting to the court that there was a law in Germany which allowed prisoners to be murdered simply so that a doctor could experiment on their bodies? A. I do not know anything about such a law.
- Q. You knew perfectly well that it was a crime you were committing, did not you? A. No.
- Q. Did you ever think at all? A. I only thought whether it is right what I am doing. I do not know; but I have to obey orders.
- Q. Did you actually force these people into the room, the gas chamber, yourself? A. Yes.
- Q. Did you actually put the gas in yourself? A. No.
- Q. And did you then watch them inside as they died through a peep-hole you had made yourself? A. No.
- Q. Did you watch them? A. No.
- Q. Do you remember making this statement about this to Commandant Jenner? A. Yes.
- Q. Did not you tell him that you watched them? A. No.
- Q. Did not you describe that the women continued to breathe for about half a minute? A. One could hear that; it was not necessary to observe it.
- Q. Did not you tell him you put the lights on inside the chamber by means of a switch placed near the funnel? A. Yes, when the prisoners entered the room.
- Q. Now let me turn to Berkenau. Were not all the five crematoria at Auschwitz concentrated in Berkenau? A. Yes.
- Q. Were you not chosen as commandant of Berkenau because you had proved yourself willing to do this sort of thing? A. No, I do not think so, because I got a special order that I had nothing to do with either crematoria or with transports.

- Q. You saw Commandant Pohl just before you went to Auschwitz, did not you?  
A. Yes.
- Q. And that was when he demanded your word of honour that you would not talk about the gas chambers, was not it? A. No, that happened a few weeks later when he came to Auschwitz; after my having been there for a few more weeks.
- Q. Why could not you tell anybody if it was all legal and proper and above-board? A. I do not know. Nothing could be said about concentration camps in the outside world.
- Q. Was not that because you knew and all of you knew that they were an outrage against decency? A. No. We never spoke about that with the outside world, and apart from that I in my rank as hauptsturmführer had no right to ask somebody with the rank of a General about such a case.
- Q. What was the purpose of the gas chambers? A. I cannot say that because I do not know; nobody explained that.
- Q. Was it not a part of the doctrine of your party to try and exterminate the Jewish race? A. I do not know. I say that we did not talk about it.
- Q. Was not it part of the policy of your party to exterminate all the intelligent people of Poland? A. I do not know.
- Q. How many people do you think were killed in those gas chambers whilst you were commandant of Berkenau? A. I cannot say, because I have not been notified about incoming transports. I have not been notified about the strength of these transports, therefore I do not know. I said already yesterday that these numbers, the strength of these things, was held in the office of the political department; there was one man who did not do anything else but work at these numbers.
- Q. In the summer of 1944 were those transports not coming in day and night? A. Yes, during a short period, approximately during a fortnight.
- Q. Do you remember when the crematoria could not keep up with burning the bodies and they had to dig ditches? A. Yes. I must add that these orders did not come from me, they emanated from Hoess. These trenches I saw myself only when they were already finished.
- Q. All this took place, did it not, in the camp of which you were commandant? A. Yes, with the exception of these parts about which I had no jurisdiction. That was under the command of Auschwitz No.1.
- Q. Did you ever protest against your camp being used for this purpose? A. I had protested that I had been fetched to Auschwitz and I explained to Hoess that I am nothing else but a lagerführer for the men's and women's compound, and for this purpose it would not seem necessary that they fetch me.
- Q. I did not ask you if you protested against a breach of your dignity in coming down from camp commandant to lagerführer. I asked you if you protested against the killing of thousands of people in the camp of which you were commandant? A. No, if I would have raised a protest probably I would have been arrested myself, would have been put behind barbed wire.
- Q. Did you prefer to be a party to wholesale murder rather than to be arrested yourself? A. I did not partake in this mass murder.
- Q. You do realise it was mass murder now, do not you? A. It was the prosecuting counsel who used this word. I have only repeated it.
- Q. Do you realise now that it was mass murder? A. No, because those who have done it in Auschwitz they probably executed orders received.

- Q. Do you think that anyone is entitled either to give or to execute orders for the mass murder of thousands of innocent people? A. Probably there must have been somebody who issued this order. I myself never saw this order. I have nothing to do with it and therefore I do not know.
- Q. I put it to you that not only were you present at these selections but you took an active, and very active, part in making the selections yourself?  
A. That is not true. It is a lie.
- Q. Do you remember when Camp "C" was liquidated? A. Yes.
- Q. Were not you present then actually helping to load people on to the transport to go to the gas chamber? A. No.
- Q. You remember Dr. Bimko's evidence here? A. I know that Dr. Bimko was here, but I do not know what she said.
- Q. Do you remember her saying you were there hitting and kicking people and putting them on to the transport? A. I believe that was another witness, not the witness Bimko.
- Q. I put it to you that Dr. Bimko said it, the witness Szafram said it, and one after another of the witness who came here all gave evidence of you taking part in these selections, and I put it to you they are telling the truth. A. No. The witnesses told a put-up story which they made up before they entered here. When one of these witnesses was asked by my defending counsel where and how she observed this she had to admit that she did not observe it and in fact she did not see anything.
- Q. Do you remember the witness Hammermasch, who said you were there and selected people from the transport on which she arrived? A. It is possible that she said it; I do not know.
- Q. Do you remember the witness Lasker? A. Yes.
- Q. Who said that you were at the camp gate when the selections were made there. A. Yes. I was then blockfuhrerstube, and that is at the gate. But those selections took place at a sort of ramp, on a platform, which is 10 or 15 metres distance from that.
- Q. Do you remember the witness Stein, who said you were on selections when she had to attend them? A. No.
- Q. Do you remember the witness Sunschein, who said that you took part in the selections? A. No.
- Q. Did selections also take place in the hospital? A. In Camp "C" there were selections under the direction of Dr. Mengele when Camp C was evacuated.
- Q. Who were selected for the gas chamber? A. So far as I know and so far as I have heard from Dr. Mengele, prisoners who were not fit for work they were selected for the gas chambers.
- Q. Now I want to turn to another point. You have heard witnesses here in person one after another and affidavits of dozens of other witnesses read with regard to the beating which went on at Auschwitz? A. Yes.
- Q. Do you say that never happened? A. Yes.
- Q. How often were you in the camp that you commanded? A. The whole day from 7 in the morning until night at 7.
- Q. Then if this happened you must have seen it. A. In that camp which I commanded, certainly.
- Q. Have you heard Grese's statement read in which she says she carried a whip and used it consistently? A. Yes.
- Q. Is that untrue? A. If she says she carried always a whip then it is exaggerated; it is not so.
- Q. I put it to you that day in and day out and from morning till night prisoners were beaten regularly in this camp of yours. A. It is not so. I shall give you an example in what insolent manner the prisoners are lying. I was told by a British officer who questioned me that there are already 1200 prisoners who said they were beaten by me. That is an example how you cannot trust what a prisoner says, how they are lying.

- Q Did you stand regularly at the camp gate watching the working kommandos go out? A. Not regularly; once at the man's compound and the other time at the women's compound.
- Q I suggest to you that then you beat the people as they passed if they were slightly out of step or if there was the slightest thing wrong? A. It is not so.
- Q Do you remember the man Glinowieski who was in here the other day? A. Yes.
- Q Do you remember him at Auschwitz? A. No.
- Q Let me suggest to you that you beat so many people you cannot remember any particular one? A. I cannot say anything against the feelings of the prosecuting counsel; I can only say I have not beaten any prisoner. Glinowieski said that I had beaten him in Autumn, 1943. When my defending ~~obliged~~ pointed out I had not been there and I arrived only in Spring, 1944, then Glinowieski's answer was "I might have been mistaken about the date". Previously he ~~misured~~ us several times that he remembered exactly the date of Autumn, 1943, and that he remembered the incident very well.
- Q Do you know the accused Weingartner, No. 3? A. Yes.
- Q What was his position at Auschwitz? A. He was blockfuhrer in the women's compound near the gate.
- Q Had he previously been in charge of a working commando of women? A. During the time I was at Berkenau, no.
- Q Was he in charge of a kommando of women who worked by the river? A. During the time when I was in Berkenau during all the whole six months he was always a blockfuhrer.
- Q What was Hoessler's position in Auschwitz? A. Hoessler was a lagor-fuhrer in Auschwitz 1.
- Q Had he previously been in Berkenau? A. It is possible; I was told that he had been previously in Berkenau.
- Q Do you remember Borman at Auschwitz? A. Yes.
- Q Had she in fact got a large wolfhound? A. Yes.
- Q Was it a large black dog? A. No, brown.
- Q Was it always with her everywhere she went? A. Yes.
- Q What was her particular function? A. Aufseherin Borman during the time when I was there had a working kommando in a garden.
- Q What was Volkenrath's position there? A. Volkenrath was in charge of stores were parcels were dealt with; later on she was transferred to Auschwitz 1 in the women's compound.
- Q Had she a sister? A. Yes.
- Q What was her sister's name? A. Weinmigor.
- Q Is the one in the dock Volkenrath? A. That is Volkenrath.
- Q What was Ehlert's position - was she at Auschwitz? A. I do not know; I cannot remember Ehlert from Auschwitz.

- Q What was Groso's position? A. She was aufseherin in Camp "C".
- Q Do you remember Lothe? A. Whether she had been a kapo, I do not know; I cannot remember her from Auschwitz.
- Q Do you remember Lobauer? A. She had something to do with working kommandos.
- Q Now turn to Belsen. You told us that in Borkonau there were selections and the people who were unable to work went to the gas chamber; is that right? A. Yes, from Camp "C".
- Q When you went to Belsen, when you took over Belsen, was it not intended to send the sick and persons who could not work from other camps to Belsen? A. Yes, I said already yesterday that Belsen was to become a camp for sick people.
- Q Was not the intention precisely the same that those unable to work at Belsen should be exterminated too? A. No.
- Q Why had there been this change of heart? A. I do not know; I received the orders Belsen is to become a camp for sick prisoners.
- Q I suggest to you that there was every intention that the sick prisoners who were unable to work at Belsen should die just as the ones at Auschwitz died? A. It is not so.
- Q And I suggest to you that having been successful at Borkonau that is why you were chosen as commandant at Belsen? A. Why I was transferred to Belsen, why I got the order to go to Belsen, I do not know. When I got my orders Glucks told me only that Belsen was to become a big camp for sick people.
- Q Was any hospital accommodation ever provided to make it into a big camp for sick people? A. No.
- Q Were any doctors ever sent there apart from two amongst 40,000? A. No; when Lollinge came it was me who pointed out that if this camp should really become a camp for sick people we needed doctors and we needed medicine.
- Q Were beds and medical supplies ever sent there? A. Medical supplies came in March and beds came also at the end of March or at the beginning of April, a part of the beds.
- Q I suggest to you there was never the slightest intention that these sick people should receive any treatment at all in that place. A. It is not so.
- Q You produced yesterday a copy of a letter which you say you sent to Oranienburg on the 1st March? A. Yes.
- Q I suggest to you that that letter was never sent at all? A. I said already yesterday that I sent this letter through a messenger to Oranienburg.
- Q Why was the copy not destroyed with all the other documents? A. This letter was a private letter and a private report to Glucks, therefore the copy of this report was amongst my private papers in my house and not in my office with the other official documents.

- Q In that letter you say: "When S.S. Standartenfuhrer Lolling inspected the camp at the end of January it was decided that the occupation of the camp by over 35,000 detainees must be considered too great. In the meantime this number has been exceeded by 7,000"? A. Yes.
- Q 35,000 and 7,000 makes 42,000, does not it? A. Yes.
- Q On the 1st March there were nothing like 42,000 people at Belsen, were there? A. I could not say exactly how many there were.
- Q Were not there 26,723? A. I said already before I do not know; the strength of the camp during the month of March I do not know.
- Q Did you use to make a strength return? A. Every fortnight.
- Q I put it to you that on the 1st of March you only had 26,723 in this camp and that this letter is a deliberate concoction made a long time afterwards, after the camp had swollen in size, and you cannot remember the date?
- A This letter was written exactly on the same date which is marked on top of the letter and it had been sent to Oranienburg on that very date.
- Q Look at this strength return and see if that is not your signature on it? (Handed) A. Yes.
- Q Does that show an opening strength for the fortnight beginning on the 1st March of 26,723? A. That is only the strength from the women's compound; the men's compound is missing.

MAJOR WINWOOD: This is the first time I have been shown this.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Col. Backhouse, if some suggestion is being made against the witness will you make it quite clear to the Court what you suggest?

COL. BACKHOUSE: I am suggesting this letter was concocted, that the copy is a copy of a letter which was never sent at all.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Concocted while he was at Belsen or afterwards?

COL. BACKHOUSE: Afterwards. I suggest it is not a genuine letter at all. I am pointing out that the figures he put in the letter are quite wrong.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: I understand that, but I think you ought to put to this witness exactly what your suggestion is; if it be that when he was shut up in those various cells somebody concocted this letter I can understand that; on the other hand I can understand the suggestion it was concocted by him at some time before Belsen was liberated, but I think you ought to put to him specifically the suggestion.

COL. BACKHOUSE: (To the witness): What I am suggesting to you is quite definitely this, that that letter was not written on the 1st March because that letter was not sent to Oranienburg but was concocted by you or ... on your behalf at a later date to provide yourself with a defence? A. That is not so; I can only repeat what I have said before. I wrote the letter on the 1st March and sent it by special courier, special messenger, to Oranienburg.

MAJOR WINWOOD: Before that document goes in may I say a word about it. May I point out to the Court that it is clearly headed "Women internees".

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: As far as I am concerned it is merely a document in German which I do not understand.

(Strength return is marked Exhibit 122,  
signed by the President and attached to  
the proceedings.)

COL. BACKHOUSE: (To the witness): Take it that that is the women internees. What was the greatest number of men internees you had in that camp?

A On that date the difference is 14,000 to 15,000.

Q You say there was no beating of prisoners in Auschwitz. Do you say there was no beating of prisoners in Bolson? A. Yes, I do.

Q You heard witness after witness go into that box and tell of the beatings that happened there; is that all untrue? A. When I went through the camps there were never beatings; when I was present there were never beatings. When I went out from the camp and left it what happened afterwards I could not say.

Q Were the kapos armed with pieces of wood? A. No.

Q Do you remember Capt. Sington the man who came in with a loud speaker van? A. Yes.

Q Did you go with him with the radio van? A. Yes.

Q Do you remember him telling us about the kapos beating men then? A. When Capt. Sington went through the camp with his loud speaker van it was told that I am no more the commandant of this camp so therefore if I would have said to anybody "Put that stick away" he would have answered "You cannot tell me; you are not the commandant of the camp".

Q That is not what I asked you. What I asked you was: did you see those kapos doing the beating? A. Yes, after the British troops came into the camp.

Q You remember Ehlert, do not you? A. Yes.

Q Do you remember hearing her statement read? A. Yes.

Q She was one of your own staff, was not she? A. Yes.

Q The second S.S. woman in the camp? A. No.

Q Was not she the deputy for Volkenrath? A. No.

Q Do you remember her saying: "I have often seen prisoners beaten at Bolson"? A. Yes, but I am astonished that she did not report this to me.

Q Do you remember her saying the conditions in Bolsen were a shame and a disgrace? A. Yes.

Q Do you remember her saying: "I say that Kramer was responsible for the conditions, among other reasons, because on one occasion when I complained of the increasing death rate to Kramer he replied: 'Let them die; why should you care'"? A. Firstly I do not see any reason why I should respond to a subordinate about the conditions of the camp, why should I give her any explanation about the conditions; secondly what she says my answer was is not true.

Q If that was your attitude it would not be much good her complaining to you if she saw somebody beating somebody? A. As an aufseherin, supervisor, it was her duty to do this. Concerning the other conditions in the camp Ehlert had no inside knowledge really about the origin of these conditions.

- Q At the moment I am talking about beating of the prisoners and ill-treatment, not about the starvation of them. Do you remember the habit of making women make sport? A. Yes.
- Q Was that done on your orders? A. These disciplinary measures did not originate from me; they belonged to the whole status of concentration camps and of women's compounds.
- Q Did you give orders for women to do it in Belsen? A. No.
- Q Is Ehlert wrong about that too? A. Yes.
- Q Now turn for a moment to the food. Did the prisoners got their entitlement in Belsen or did not they? A. Yes, with the exception of bread.
- Q Do you seriously say that is enough for somebody to live on? A. I said already before that for healthy persons it would have been sufficient for a few weeks; for sick persons, however, it was not enough.
- Q What was that ration? A. Three-quarters of a litre of food - soup.
- Q And you think that was sufficient? A. As I said, a healthy man could keep going on it for a few weeks, but it was not enough for sick people.
- Q What special rations were provided for sick people? A. With the exception of the diet, nothing.

THE PRESIDENT: Would you repeat that again?

THE INTERPRETER: With the exception of a diet nothing; there was a special diet for some sick people, for the others nothing.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not quite get that answer.

- COL. BACKHOUSE: I will try to clear it up. (To the witness): You say with the exception of the diet; how many people in that camp got a special diet? A. I do not know; the doctor had to say that.
- Q You were in charge of the camp, were not you? A. Yes, but I could not give orders to the doctors. The doctors only came under me as far as they were members of the S.S. but not as far as the doing of their duties was concerned.
- Q Who provided the food, you or the doctors? A. I with my administration.
- Q How many people did you provide a special diet for? A. As I said, I do not know; the reports had to come from the hospital to the administration.
- Q Is the real answer nil? A. There was a certain amount of diet got for the hospital.
- Q And you do not know how much? A. No, I do not know.
- Q Did you ever go into the hospital? A. I have been several times in the hospital.
- Q Did you see the conditions there? A. Yes.
- Q Did you see the conditions in the huts? A. Yes.

- Q Did you watch these people slowly starving and dying ? A Yes. That is to say, I did not look at it, I saw it from the daily reports that pointed out how many people were dying every day.
- Q Did you see these people in the camp gradually dying of starvation and thirst ? A Yes. I mentioned these facts in my letter to Obergruppenfuhrer Glucks. I told him things like that would be common.
- Q And in spite of the fact that these people were starving and dying you ordered them out on appell ? A Not the sick people, as I told this morning.
- Q Are you seriously suggesting that two doctors could certify the sick in that camp ? A With these two doctors there were a certain number of doctors coming from the prisoners themselves. It is not my fault that I did not get any more S.S. doctors; I have asked for them.
- Q You have heard of these people standing for hours, fainting and being left where they lay in the snow on appell; is that true ? A I heard it, but it is not true. Since the period when these many transports arrived it was practically impossible to hold roll calls. There were at the utmost two roll calls every week, but no more.
- Q What time in the morning were these wretched people roused ? A People were not roused at all; the roll calls took place after the working parties had left.
- Q What time did the working kommandos leave ? A About a quarter to 7 or 7 o'clock. That was in April; in March and February it was later, about half past 7.
- Q Now the question of the water supply. How far was the river from the camp ? A Several hundred metres.
- Q About how many, 200, 300 ? A From the inhabited men's camp, 400 to 500 metres.
- Q Why did you not pump water from the river ? A I have no apparatus and no material to get the water from the river.
- Q Do you know British troops did it with the material that was in the camp ? A Perhaps in the Wehrmacht barracks, but not in my camp.
- Q Did it never occur to you to march some prisoners down to the river and let them get a drink ? A No, and furthermore Major Lomann from the Wehrmacht barracks told me that the water of the river Meise was not fit for drinking.
- Q Is not that the water which was pumped to the camp at any time ? A No, the pumps worked with other water.
- Q Do you know that that is the water that has been used for the camp ever since ? A No.
- Q You were using the water out of the concrete tanks in the camp, were you not ? A Yes.
- Q You have heard what filth there was in those tanks, have you not ? A I have had these ponds pumped out and cleaned about 14 days beforehand.
- Q You know what filth was found in those cisterns, do you not ? A No, I only know that when these ponds were pumped out for the first time there was dirt in them; later on I do not know.
- Q Why did you not ever go to the General and tell him exactly what was

happening in your camp ? A Because the General would not have been able to help me

Q Was it not because you were frightened to tell any decent person what was going on in your camp ? A No.

Q Was it not for precisely the same reason that you were not allowed to talk about the gas chambers ?

THE INTERPRETER: He does not understand.

COLONEL BACKHOUSE: Never mind.

THE WITNESS: What does it have to do with the gas chamber ?

COLONEL BACKHOUSE: There was a bakery in the Wehrmacht barracks capable of making 60,000 loaves a day, was there not ? A There was a bakery, but I cannot believe it was capable to make 60,000.

Q Do you not think that the General, or any other decent person, would have helped you with food if you ever told them of the way in which these people were dying and shown them the living skeletons that there were in your camp ? A The General could not have helped me in this respect. The food that was in the stores could only be obtained by means of special indents, and I only could get my food from the civilian administration and not from the Wehrmacht.

Q You had people starving and dying, had you not ? A Yes, because I got not enough food.

Q Do you think a German officer in the Wehrmacht would have allowed that to go on without helping ? A He could not have helped me because he was not allowed to give me anything.

Q Did you ever ask him ? A No. The food that was stored there was only for the Wehrmacht. The only thing I received from them was every week 10,000 loaves. I want to give an example. I received my meat from Celle, after making an indent for it. If I had asked the General to give me meat from the Wehrmacht barracks stores he would have said: "It is for the Wehrmacht, and furthermore you cannot indent for it because you have to do it in Celle".

Q Did you not in fact get vegetables from the Wehrmacht store ? A Not I, but camp No. 2, Hoessler, received some from the Wehrmacht stores.

Q Then if you had asked perhaps you might have got some ? A No.

Q Is not the truth of the matter that you never tried in any way to help these people at all ? A That is not true. I have written to several firms to get additional food. The copies of the letters and the answers should be with my private correspondence, and I think the Court should know these papers or at least should be able to obtain them.

Q I suggest to you that the transports that poured in, poured in for precisely the same reason they poured into Berkenau ? A No.

Q I suggest to you that you never even troubled to clear up the corpses from the camp until you knew the truce was being signed ? A If that was true I could have spared many litres of Diesel oil. Until five days before the arrival of the British troops the corpses were taken to the crematorium by truck and by horse cart.

Q Do you know how many thousands were still lying unburied in the camp when the British came in ? A No. It was reported to me by the Lagerfuehrer two days before the British troops arrived that there were no more corpses

lying about in the mens' compound.

Q Do you know that the British found 13,000 corpses lying unburied in that camp ?

A I have heard it, but I cannot believe it.

Q Did you hear Le Druillenee's account of how he spent the last five days before the British came in from morning till night with 2,000 others and more, dragging corpses to a mass grave ? A I heard the statement.

Q Do you doubt the truth of it ?

A Only as to the number of the people working on that job.

Q Is it true that those sick and starving men were employed from morning to night dragging corpses to clear up the camp before the British came ?

A Not the sick and dying people, because in the meantime healthy people had arrived with new transports. If it had only been sick and dying people I do not believe that the witness Le Druillenee could have done this work for five days without food.

Q Did you watch that procession yourself ? A I have seen it.

Q Do you still say you saw no-one beaten in that camp ? A With this work of dragging corpses nobody was beaten, at least as long as I was present.

Q Did you see anybody shot during that period ? A Yes.

Q Who did the shooting ?

A In the last days the members of the German Wehrmacht or Hungarians.

Q Anybody, I suppose, who was not under your command ?

A After the camp had been taken over by the Hungarians the Wehrmacht was in command over it. I had only to look after the administration.

Q And so you never interfered if they shot a few of your prisoners ?

A I was never present at the shooting itself.

Q Did you see any shooting near any of the kitchens ? A Not near the kitchen, but as I mentioned before, there was shooting after the British

troops arrived, near the potato patch. I did not see it, but I

heard it.

- Q Have you never seen anybody shot near the kitchen ? A. I have spoken about the last few days; not during that period, but before this period, yes.
- Q Who did that shooting ? A. Is the question in the last few days or before ?
- Q At any time whilst you were in command at Belsen ? A. Previously three members of the SS staff and later on three Hungarians or members of the Wehrmacht.
- Q Which members of the SS staff ? A. Members of the Guard company who were detailed as guards.
- Q Can you give me the names of some of them ? A. No; I made some enquiries about it and I sent all the reports to the police in Hamburg.
- Q Let me suggest to you that your own cooks were regularly shooting from the kitchen windows ? A. That is not so.
- Q And that you yourself took part as well ? A. It is not true.
- Q I suggest to you that it was a regular sport amongst the SS to wait for the prisoners going near the kitchens and then take pot-shots at them ? A. I think that is a fantasy of the witnesses. I could not image that anybody knowing that he would be shot in the vicinity of the kitchen would nevertheless go there.
- Q Did you see the witness Sompolinski with a bullet through his hand when he came into this court ? A. Yes, I have seen him.
- Q I put it to you that you in fact shot that man yourself ? A. I remember the words of the witness Sompolinski. I do not know whether I should say that he was mistaken or whether he lied deliberately in accusing me that I shot him. I have never shot anybody during the whole time of my work in concentration camps.
- Q You have told us too that you never beat people ? A. Yes.
- Q Do you remember the Russians building a hut ? A. Yes, I do.
- Q That really happened ? They were in fact building it at least ? A. Yes.
- Q Was there a man called Markovitch amongst them ? A. I do not know.
- Q I suggest to you that he is the man you kicked until he fell to the ground and lay there dead. A. That is not so, because the two witnesses were different in their evidence. One said she saw that I was kicking and beating four; the other said only one. They put up this whole story before they entered the court room, but later on they did not exactly remember what to say.
- Q Did you kick any of those Russians ? A. No.
- Q You remember the Russian girl who escaped and you say you boxed her ears ? A. Yes.
- Q Was Herta Ehlert present ? A. It is possible, but I do not know. I know that Volkenrath was present but whether Ehlert was there I do not know.

- Q Will you just listen to Ehliert's description and then I will ask you about it. "Kramer, the commandant, questioned the girl in front of several of us SS women". Is that true ? A. I remember only the presence of Volkenrath because later on I put Volkenrath in charge of that girl.
- Q She goes on: "And I saw him kicking and shaking her and later hitting her with a stick on her head and face all over her body quite unmercifully". A. I told you already that I slapped her face. That is all. I did not have a stick in my hand.
- Q "As a result of this she gave the names of two girls whom she said had helped her to escape". Is that true ? A. That is possible; I do not remember.
- Q "Kramer sent for those two girls"; is that true ? A. I do not remember.
- Q "And instructed Kasainitzky to give each of them five strokes on the bare behind to make them confess". A. No; although I do not remember the other things I do remember this quite clearly, that I never issued such an order either in Berkenau or at Belsen.
- Q I suggest to you that you beat that girl, that you know you did, and that that answer is no more truthful than any of the other answers you have given this afternoon ? A. I have said nothing but the truth.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you re-examine, Major Winwood ?

MAJOR WINWOOD: May I ask permission to postpone my re-examination until to-morrow ? I leave it, of course, entirely in the hands of the court.

(The Court confer)

THE PRESIDENT: Do you visualise a very long re-examination ? I feel there must be no question of a precedent being established because it is getting late in the evening, and it should normally take place straight-away. In this case, however, the court will adjourn.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Might I ask if the re-examination is not to take place to-night that care should be taken to see that the witness does not discuss the case with anybody else at all in the meantime.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

(At 16.55 hours the Court adjourns until 0930 hours to-morrow morning, Wednesday, 10th October 1945)

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